

Amanda at Gateway Technical College Health Profession Opportunity Project (HPOP)

Last fall Amanda Roberson was working at Wheaton Franciscan Medical Group (WFMG) as a Customer Service Associate when Wheaton Franciscan gave her the opportunity to pursue a Nursing Assistant certification. Through Gateway Technical College's (GTC) partnership with Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare (WFHC), a select group of WFHC employees participated in a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) class on the WFHC–All Saints Spring Street campus. The classes were taught by Gateway Technical College staff with case management and support services provided by the staff of the Health Profession Opportunity Project (HPOP). The cohort of 12 students began classes on January 9, 2012, and completed the class on March 15, 2012. Amanda excelled in her CNA class and passed with an A. She passed her state certification exam on June 9, 2012.

After receiving her CNA certification, Amanda decided to continue her education with GTC as a student in HPOP, a program supported by the Health Profession Opportunity Grants (HPOG) funded by the Administration for Children and Families' Office of Family Assistance. Amanda had considered returning to college to complete her Nursing degree but had found lack of financial resources to be a major barrier. When she enrolled in HPOP, she modified her career path to pursue a CNA certification and Health Unit Coordinator technical diploma with an eye toward job advancement. Through participation in personal strengths testing, student development activities, student advising, and case management, she is now pursuing a career as a Surgical Technician.

With her CNA certification, Amanda applied for a position with Midwest Orthopedic Specialty Hospital in Franklin, Wisconsin, which is actually part of Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare. Amanda felt working there would give her an opportunity to move into a Surgical Assistant position, which could be helpful as she continues her studies in Gateway's Surgical Technology degree program. On June 17, 2012, she was hired as a CNA at Midwest Orthopedic Specialty Hospital with an increase in pay and work hours that allow her to spend more time with her husband and daughter.

**Prudence at Gateway Technical College
Health Profession Opportunity Project (HPOP)**

Prudence (Trudy) worked for many years in environmental services. She cleaned in the ER and other areas of the hospital. As a single mother of four children, she said she had always wanted a better job which would allow her to be a better provider for her kids. She had a desire to provide patient care. However, without the skills or the means to acquire the skills, she had resigned herself to taking care of the building instead of patients.

Today her life has changed for the better. Trudy completed the Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare (WFHC)–All Saints CNA program in March. After months of applying for CNA positions, she was finally offered a CNA position in the WFHC–All Saints ER.

Trudy said she called HPOP first on the happy day she was offered the job because, without the opportunity that HPOP gave her to get her CNA certification, this day would not have been possible. She wanted the HPOP staff to know how grateful she was for the program and thankful that it was there at a time in her life when she needed it the most. She started her new job on September 9th.